



The Delta Conservancy

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy

Winter 2013

"A partner for balanced ecosystem restoration and economic development in the Delta."

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Delta Conservancy Strategic Implementation Plan

Following the approval of the strategic plan in June 2012, the Program and Policy Subcommittee provided direction regarding Implementation Plan development and Delta Conservancy staff developed a draft plan. At its December 12, 2012 meeting, the Program and Policy Subcommittee approved the draft Implementation Plan.

The plan outlines specific projects with actions for each strategic goal and objective. Staff is assigned to each project and an outcome and target date is identified for each action. This plan will be amended and updated as new

actions are introduced, and as projects are implemented by the Conservancy.

The plan summarizes the activities of the Conservancy for fiscal year 2011-2012 and describes the Conservancy's current projects for fiscal year 2012-2013, by program. Each current year project describes its strategic plan's goal and objective which the project addresses.

The draft Implementation Plan can be viewed at: www.deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

Branding in the Delta:

What Makes a Brand Effective?

Wikipedia defines a brand as "a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that differentiates a destination from all the others" and according to www.entrepreneur.com's John Williams, a brand, "is derived from who you are, who you want to be and who people perceive you to be."

Defining "who we are" in the Delta is a challenge. Marina owners see the Delta as a great spot for boating and want to promote it as a boating paradise. Farmers know it to have the best conditions for bountiful crops and want to promote their products. Long time residents see the Delta as a place rich with stories of how families found success in the face of challenges. The goal of Delta Branding is to find a brand that supports all of Delta's rich diversity.

Visitors who come for boating, wind surfing, wines, or family farm u-picks often come for only one activity and are unaware of others. The challenge will be to create a brand that opens visitors eyes to the activities and treasures that abound in the Delta.

Early participation by local businesses and interests in community branding meetings will be important. Input from the many Delta communities will give marketing professionals feedback to create ideas that will be broad and inclusive to capture the Delta's diversified

To gain the greatest benefit of the Delta Branding investment, community participation and support is essential.

**HOLD
THE DATE**

**Join us at our
Delta Waterway
Cleanup**

**Saturday
April 13, 2013
9:00 a.m. to Noon**

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Chair's Perspective



Open House February 15, 2013

*By Ken Vogel, San Joaquin County Supervisor and Chair
Delta Conservancy Board*

I am happy to announce that the Delta Conservancy will be holding its first open house on Friday, February 15, 2013, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, at their new office located at 1450 Halyard Blvd., Suite 6, in West

Sacramento. This will be an opportunity for the Delta community and agencies to meet the Conservancy Board and staff, to see their new facilities and learn more about the many activities of the Conservancy. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to come by and enjoy the afternoon. More details will be available soon.

Branding in the Delta

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interests. Branding supporters and business owners can then review several branding packages (see box below) and ask, "Will this brand attract people to the Delta?"

Like dropping a seed into the ground and waiting months for it to bear fruit, a branding campaign takes a few years to see results. It will take time for existing visitors to identify with a new image. Most potential visitors will need to see consistent messages several times to develop familiarity with the Delta before they visit.

Key Ingredients to a Strong Brand

A Logo: Place it everywhere.

A Message: Train everyone to give the same message.

A Tagline: A memorable statement that captures an 'essence.'

A 'Voice': Is it fun? Adventurous? Relaxed? Informal?

A well-designed branding plan will provide business owners guidelines on how to include branding elements on websites, in promotions and onsite. To gain the greatest benefit of the Delta Branding investment, community participation and support is essential.

Moving Delta Branding Forward

While funding is being pursued, Conservancy staff is continuing to discuss the branding concept with stakeholders and identify other projects that will promote economic development in the Delta.

To move the branding effort forward, staff surveyed branding supporters to solicit actions that could take place with or without a formal branding campaign. Staff is meeting with local business owners and chambers to better understand branding-related needs, as well as gather other economic development ideas. Staff is collaborating with tourism agencies to find out how to best tap into their resources. A meeting is being planned for early February to discuss what can be done to promote the Delta and attract visitors using the Visit California and Central Valley Tourism Association websites.

If you have any questions or would like to participate in this effort, please contact:
Amanda Bohl, 916-376-4022 or
amanda.bohl@deltaconservancy.ca.gov.

Join our List Serve on our website for future meeting announcements.

Written by Susan L. Roberts

Campbell's Corner



Delta Conservancy Receives Community Feedback

On November 14, in Courtland, the Delta Conservancy invited the Delta community to meet with 15 agencies to discuss ecosystem restoration efforts

and levee projects.

Using an "open forum" format, Delta residents and business owners were able to speak face-to-face with agency staff to better understand how current activities relate to the larger Delta planning efforts, and how the agencies coordinate their efforts.

Most importantly, doors were opened for Delta residents to get more information from agencies to better understand and better be able to provide input on projects.

I think two key lessons were appreciated by both the community and the agencies: 1) It is very challenging to explain how the many agencies implementing Delta projects coordinate and integrate, and 2) It is very important for the Delta community to be informed and engaged in the activities that directly impact their livelihood. Feedback from participants indicated it was a positive event and well appreciated.

Following the success of this event, we're planning an outreach meeting in March inviting agencies working on water quality and monitoring. Dates and details will be available soon.

Please let us know if you have any suggestions of other topics you'd like to see discussed in the Delta.

Delta Restoration Network Designed to Improve Coordination

The Delta Conservancy, in collaboration with state and federal agencies and the Delta community, is developing an outline of the proposed Delta Restoration Network (DRN). This voluntary network is designed to share information, and improve coordination and integration of Delta restoration projects.

The first DRN meeting was held on December 17, 2012 and individuals and organizations were identified to participate in this effort.

The Delta Conservancy developed a diagram showing the organizations and main elements of the restoration network including strategic planning, tracking, land management, funding, and outreach.

The Conservancy, with other agencies and local communities, is currently discussing objectives of the DRN and the role of the participants.

Give Your Grant Proposal an Edge

Funders want to ensure they make an impact in the community and often require a solid evaluation plan with their grant proposal. Partnering with Sul and Associates, the Conservancy is offering a free workshop on developing an effective evaluation plan.

Using a tool known as the Evaluation Matrix, David Sul will help participants tie program activities to program goals and lay the

foundation for developing evaluation tools to measure progress and interpret results. This approach helps managers evaluate projects and manage toward success. Likewise, if project goals aren't

February 20, 2013
9:00 am-12:00 pm
Delta Conservancy
1450 Halyard Drive
West Sacramento



Sacramento-
San Joaquin

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Conservancy**

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A Brief History of Brannan Island State Recreation Area

For thousands of years, the Sacramento River has flowed from Mt. Shasta, gathering water from other rivers and creeks along the way. The river slows in the flatlands and spreads out into an immense marsh filled with wildlife.

Upon joining the San Joaquin River, these rivers flow into a great estuary, a narrow channel, and finally into the ocean. Where the rivers meet is a great inland reverse Delta, unique on the west coast of the Americas.

In 1849 gold was discovered upstream and the landscape was changed forever. Steamboats brought passengers and supplies to Sutter's Fort and returned to San Francisco with fresh produce. As the population increased and increased local food supplies were needed, farmers discovered that the rich peat of the marshlands were perfect for growing crops. To prevent winter storms from ruining these crops, levees were built by hand—primarily by Chinese immigrants who had initially worked in the gold mines. Later, dredges scooped up the river bottom to strengthen the levees. Farmers and workers began building towns behind the levees.

A few miles south of the small city of Rio Vista lies Brannan Island, named after businessman and property owner Samuel Brannan. In 1921, the southern tip of Brannan Island was a swampy area of approximately 336 acres, owned by Rio Vista resident Peter Cook. The land was acquired by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Drainage District for the State Reclamation Board for use by the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers as a disposal site of sand and silt from river dredging. Between 1926 and 1929, Brannan Island continued to be used as an area for dredge spoils and as a result was raised 20 to 40 feet above the river level. With the exception of sand sales to private contractors, the idle land became an unofficial dump, which was frequented by campers and squatters. In 1950 the Rio Vista Chamber spearheaded a drive to make the area a State Park.

Gradually, improvements made Brannan Island State Recreation Area an important facility in the Delta. It currently boasts two campgrounds, an RV area, group picnicking, walk-in camping, trails, and a swimming area



on Seven-Mile Slough. Also within Brannan Island State Recreation Area is Franks Tract, a 3,300 acre area accessible only by boat and popular for fishing and hunting. A visitor's center—

founded and run by the Delta Natural History Association—is currently closed.

Brannan Island State Recreation Area is the only State Park within the Delta providing visitors with sloughs and channels for exploration, and a glimpse of what the Delta looked like 150 years ago.

Based on a submission by Jan Vick, Sea Wing Creations. Jan, former Mayor of Rio Vista and landscape photographer, is a frequent visitor with her husband, Gene, who is a past -President of the Delta Natural History Association.



Historical Ecology Report Reveals Diversity in the Delta

In August 2012, the San Francisco Estuary Institute - Aquatic Science Center released a new report titled, “Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Historical Ecology Investigation: Exploring Pattern and Process”. The purpose of this study was not to suggest that the Delta be returned to its original state, but to provide a historical ecological context for large-scale restoration efforts in the Delta. In order to reconstruct the historical Delta, thousands of historical maps, texts, photographs, and artistic materials were synthesized and analyzed. This work revealed large-scale patterns that existed within the Delta before its landscape was altered by levees, agriculture, grazing, and other activities in the mid-to-late 1800s. These large-scale patterns can help us understand how different physical components fit together to form functional landscapes that offer greater ecological benefits than the sum of the parts.

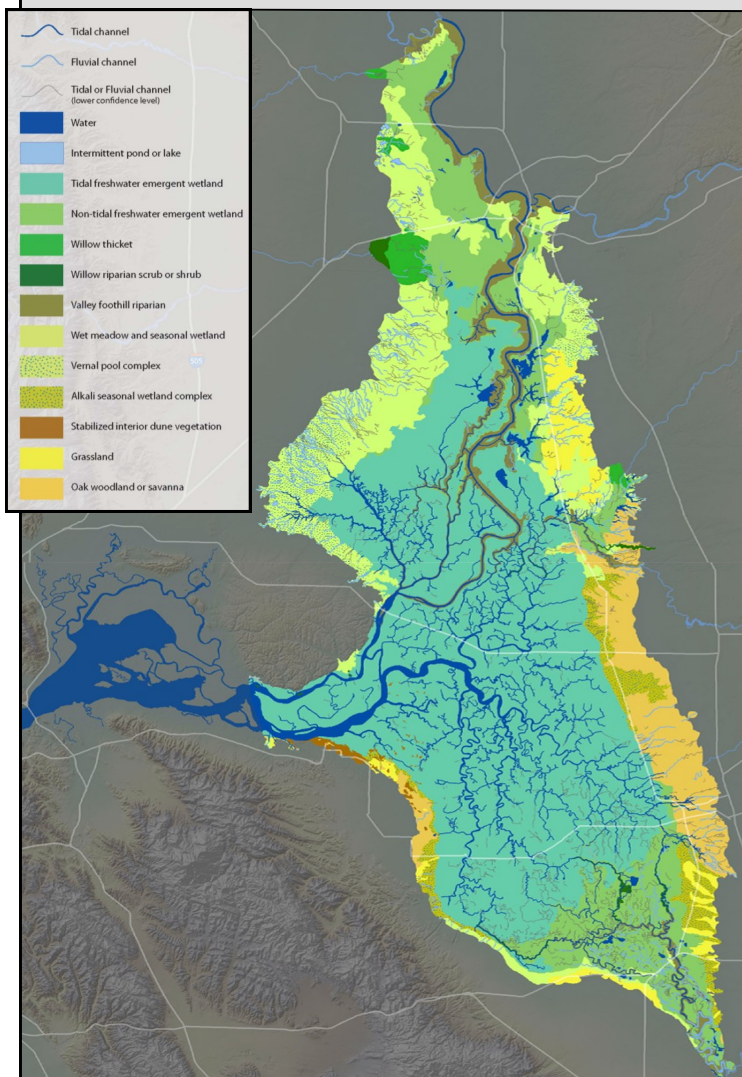
There were three primary landscapes within the Delta of the past: tidal freshwater wetlands interwoven with tidal channels dominated the Central Delta; flood basins bordered by broad riparian forests on the natural levees of the Sacramento River in the North Delta; and the three distributary branches of the San Joaquin River that supported a broad floodplain, which gradually merged with tidal wetlands in the South Delta.

The historical Delta was comprised of a diverse array of habitat types and broad physical gradients. These gradients (e.g. gradients in soil type, water salinity, elevations, temperatures, and tidal to river influence on flood frequency, duration, magnitude, and extent) shaped the landscape-scale habitat patterns found in the historical Delta.

Additionally, gradual transition zones between habitat types allowed for species to

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The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta of the early 1800s



This map reconstructs the patterns of habitat types in the Delta region prior to the significant modification of the past 160 years. Extensive tidal wetlands and large tidal channels are seen at the central core of the Delta. Riparian forest extends downstream into the tidal Delta along the natural levees of the Sacramento River, and to a certain extent on the San Joaquin and Mokelumne rivers. To the north and south, tidal wetlands grade into non-tidal perennial wetlands. At the upland edge, an array of seasonal wetlands, grasslands, and oak savannas and woodlands occupy positions along the alluvial fans of the rivers and streams that enter the valley.

Source: Whipple AA, Grossinger RM, Rankin D, Stanford B, Askevold RA. 2012. Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Historical Ecology Investigation: Exploring Pattern and Process. Prepared for the California Department of Fish and Game and Ecosystem Restoration Program. A Report of SFEI-ASC's Historical Ecology Program, Publication #672, San Francisco Estuary Institute-Aquatic Science Center, Richmond, CA.

Historical Ecology Report

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move and adapt along physical gradients. The sharp edges that exist in the Delta today do not leave much room for natural adjustments that gave the historical Delta its resiliency. This knowledge can be used to build greater flexibility and adaptive capacity into the Delta of the future.

The Delta we know today is one of the most significantly altered deltas in the world. Approximately 3 percent of the Delta's historical tidal wetland area remains today and open water areas have increased. This shift is significant as wetlands contribute nutrients and organic matter to the Delta waters and the reduction of these components has impacted food availability for fish. While the Delta has been irreversibly altered, many fundamental physical processes and landforms are still present to some extent.

Understanding these landscape-scale patterns is important as native species were adapted to the patterns and processes of the past. This knowledge is useful in designing more effective restoration projects. The Delta has changed dramatically over time and cannot and should not be returned to its original state, but the

functions that certain habitats maintained can be restored, which will allow native species more potential to adapt and grow. For example, a restoration project that is connected to multiple other habitat types is likely to provide more ecosystem benefits than a similar, but isolated, restoration project. The connectivity of features (e.g. small tidal channels connecting marsh habitat to aquatic environments) is a key ecological function of many Delta habitats. As stated in the report, "The landscape perspective offered by understanding the historical Delta benefits the development and implementation of restoration strategies in the Delta that reestablish functional elements with appropriate scale, location, and connectivity to support native species and increase long-term overall ecosystem health and resilience."

The historical ecology report was prepared in cooperation with and funded by the California Department of Fish and Game and Ecosystem Restoration Program.

Written by Kristal Davis Fadtko, Staff Environmental Scientist; assisted by Katherine Moss, Intern.

"The landscape perspective offered by understanding the historical Delta benefits the development and implementation of restoration strategies in the Delta..."

Give Your Grant Proposal an Edge

(Continued from page 3)

achieved, the evaluation plan may help determine why they weren't and what can be done to improve the project.

A sound, well-designed evaluation plan that includes project goals, objectives, and

performance measures can help attract funders to your project proposal.

Sul & Associates, located in Rio Vista, is a professional monitoring and evaluation firm serving organizations attuned to the social



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